

State of Alaska Department of **Transportation and Public Facilities**

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NEWS RELEASE

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Department To Merge Alaska Marine Highway System With Southeast Region

The DOT/PF today announced that it will merge the Alaska Marine Highway System with the Southeast Regional office. The merger, effective October 1st, will officially put AMHS management under the supervision of the Southeast Regional Director.

The merger is occurring as a result of legislative budget cuts and the department's effectiveness review. Last session, the Legislature cut \$1.3 million from the FY98 AMHS budget that included the elimination of the Director's position. In addition to the Director's position, the cut forced the elimination of 18 shoreside jobs and 8 vessel employees.

"By merging AMHS into the Southeast Region, we will consolidate functions that were affected by the budget cuts," stated DOT Commissioner Joe Perkins. "In addition, the merger will further strengthen our commitment to an intermodal transportation system in Southeast Alaska."

The merger is also the result of an effectiveness review started by the Department last November. The effectiveness review was initiated to find ways to become more efficient, to reduce costs, and to provide better service. Part of the effectiveness review process included working with a 14-member Public Advisory Group.

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